

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT



ENEMY ROAD STATUS
LAOS PANHANDLE

AUGUST 1969

Declass Review by NIMA/DOD

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OCTOBER 1969

GROUP 1: EXCLUDED FROM
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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT

ENEMY ROAD STATUS LAOS PANHANDLE AUGUST 1969

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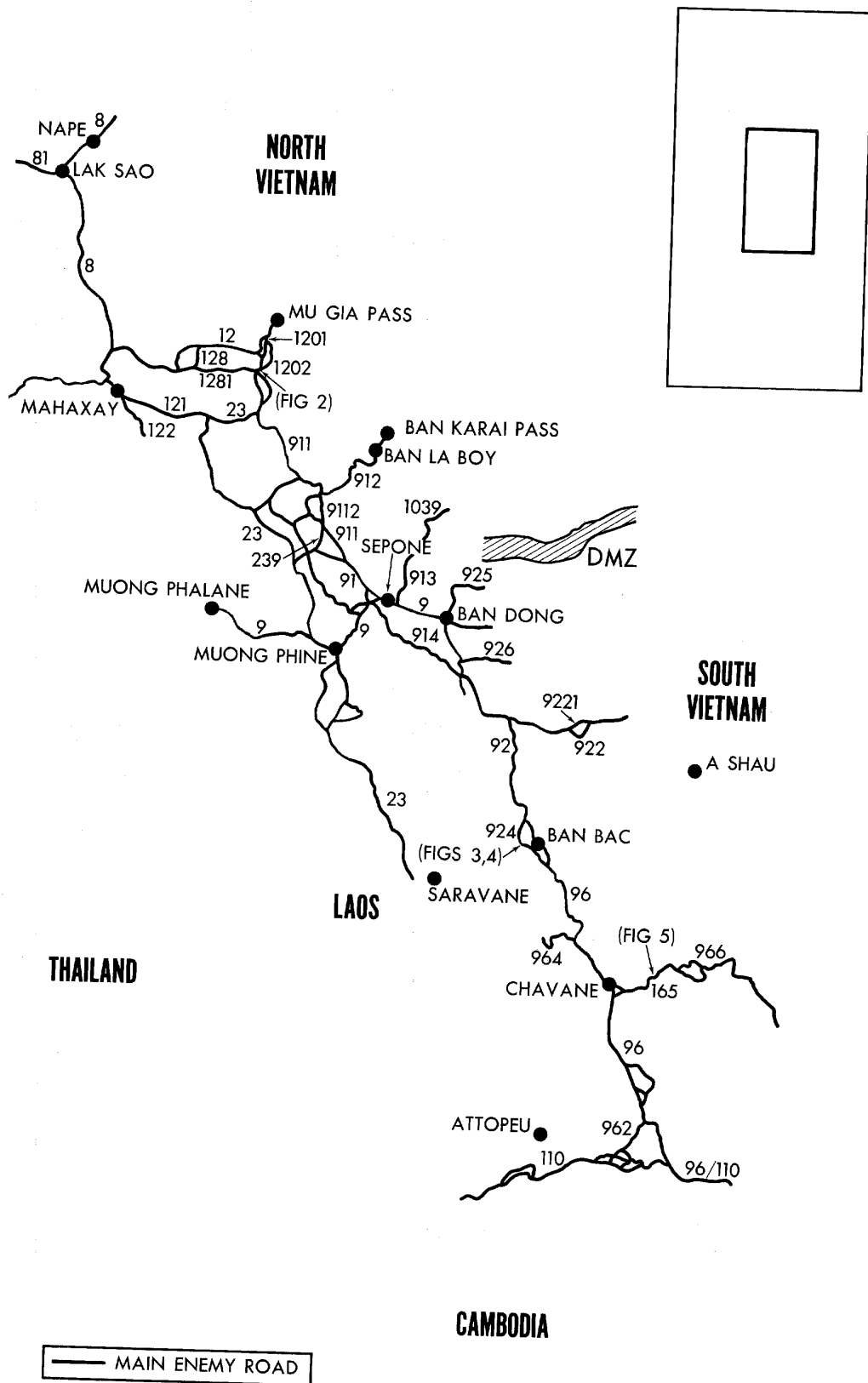


FIGURE 1. ENEMY ROAD NETWORK, LAOS PANHANDLE

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BASIC DESCRIPTION

All the major enemy-controlled roads in the Laos Panhandle are unserviceable or in disuse for the first time since this road net was completed (Figure 1). Damaging monsoon rains and heavy bombing raids have forced the closing of even the so-called "all-weather capability" roads on the network known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

During the past two rainy seasons, traffic from Mu Gia and Ban Karai Passes could travel as far as the A Shau Valley in South Vietnam via Laos Routes 911, 91, 9, 92 and 922. This rainy season, however, the latest traffic apparently moved south from Route 913 near Sepone to Route 926 and possibly over a few miles on Route 23 south of Muong Phine. Even these roads were closed by [REDACTED]

The general condition of the Panhandle roads is very poor although a few routes such as 8, 239, and 911 north of 912 have a limited number of interdicted points and these can easily be repaired. Routes in extremely poor condition include the Mu Gia Pass roads (12, 1201, and 1202), the segment of 96 between Ban Bac and 964, all of Route 964, and the eastern two-thirds of Routes 912, 922, and 165/966.

The following is a more detailed description of the Panhandle roads, from north to south, as observed on aerial photography from mid-to-late [REDACTED]

Routes No.

8 - Although the entire road is in disuse, only a few places have been severely interdicted and this route could be made serviceable with comparatively little effort.

81 - Only the western segment near Lak Sao is observed and is not being used.

12 - The entire road in enemy territory is in very poor condition, especially the Mu Gia Pass segment between Route 23 and the North Vietnam border. No evidence of repair is observed and the main maintenance problem will be bomb crater repair or by-pass construction.

128 and 1281 - Both roads are in disuse. The roads never consisted of much more than vehicle tracks. The main problem will be to upgrade the roadbed.

1201 and 1202 - These Mu Gia by-pass roads are interdicted in several places. The southern segment of 1202 has occasionally been under water (Figure 2).

121 - This road is in disuse. It was used during the last dry season for the first time in three years.

122 - The road is overgrown in most places. It was not used during the last dry season.

23 - The northern segments, especially around Ban Phan Hop, are in very poor condition. The segment south of Muong Phine may have received limited use during the first part of the reporting period, but it later appeared to be in disuse, as was Route 9 in the immediate vicinity of Muong Phine. North of Saravane around the Se Done (river) the road appeared in disuse.

911 - Between Routes 23 and 912 the road is in fair condition and could be used again with little difficulty. However, from its intersection with Route 912 southward to its terminus the road is in very poor condition.

912 - This road, which was considered to have all-weather capability, is unserviceable. The "Dog's Head" area around Ban La Boy has been heavily bombed and the segment near the border is closed by both landslides and interdictions. Between Ban La Boy and Route 911 the road is interdicted in many places, especially on the northern segment. Some attempt at repair has been observed at Ban La Boy, but apparently to no avail as observed on the latest coverage in late [REDACTED]

9112 - This short road appears to have been used well into the rainy season, but it is now unserviceable.

239 - The segment between Routes 91 and 911 appears serviceable but not in use.

91 - This road is closed due to landslides and washouts, as is its western by-pass. The eastern by-pass is in disuse.

1039 - The road is unserviceable, where observed, at a point 2.5 nautical miles (nm) from its southern terminus. No evidence of construction is observed between its southern terminus and the northern terminus of Route 913.

913 - On photography of [REDACTED] the southern one-third of the route was serviceable and in use. However, on [REDACTED] photography, the road was interdicted in at least

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three places. The northern segment of the road shows no new construction. The new road between 911 and 913 is overgrown in places and is in disuse.

925 - This road is in disuse where observed near its junction with Route 9.

9 - This main east-west road has been unserviceable and in disuse near the South Vietnam border and between Sepone and Muong Phalane throughout the reporting period. Between Route 913 and Ban Dong, the road was serviceable until at least [REDACTED]. It was observed interdicted, however, on photography of [REDACTED].

914 - The northern half of Route 914 is cut in several places, especially south of its junction with Route 9. The southern segment, seen on photography of [REDACTED] was serviceable and appears to be in good condition.

92 - This road was serviceable from Route 9 to Route 926 on [REDACTED] and may have had limited use. It was intermittently serviceable between Routes 914 and 922 and some repair work was observed along this segment. However, a point 3 nm north of the Route 914 junction was in disuse throughout the reporting period. The segment of 92 south of route 922 has not been used recently and is in very poor condition.

926 - Traffic could use the western half, but the road, although generally not in bad condition, was cut in at least two places on the eastern half and there were no indications of traffic crossing into South Vietnam.

922 and 9221 - Used nearly all of last year, this corridor is now in disuse and will require major repair efforts at several points of interdiction. The condition of the road becomes progressively worse from west to east.

924 - This short road, similar to the adjacent segment on Route 92, is in very poor condition and several major landslides are observed (Figures 3 and 4).

96 - This main north-south route is in disuse where observed from Ban Bac to Route 110. The segment south of Chavane has a few areas in poor condition.

964 - Route 964 is in very poor condition. The eastern half is overgrown in places and the western half is heavily cratered. The transshipment point on the Se Kong (river) at the western terminus of 964 is interdicted, which may hinder river traffic in this area.

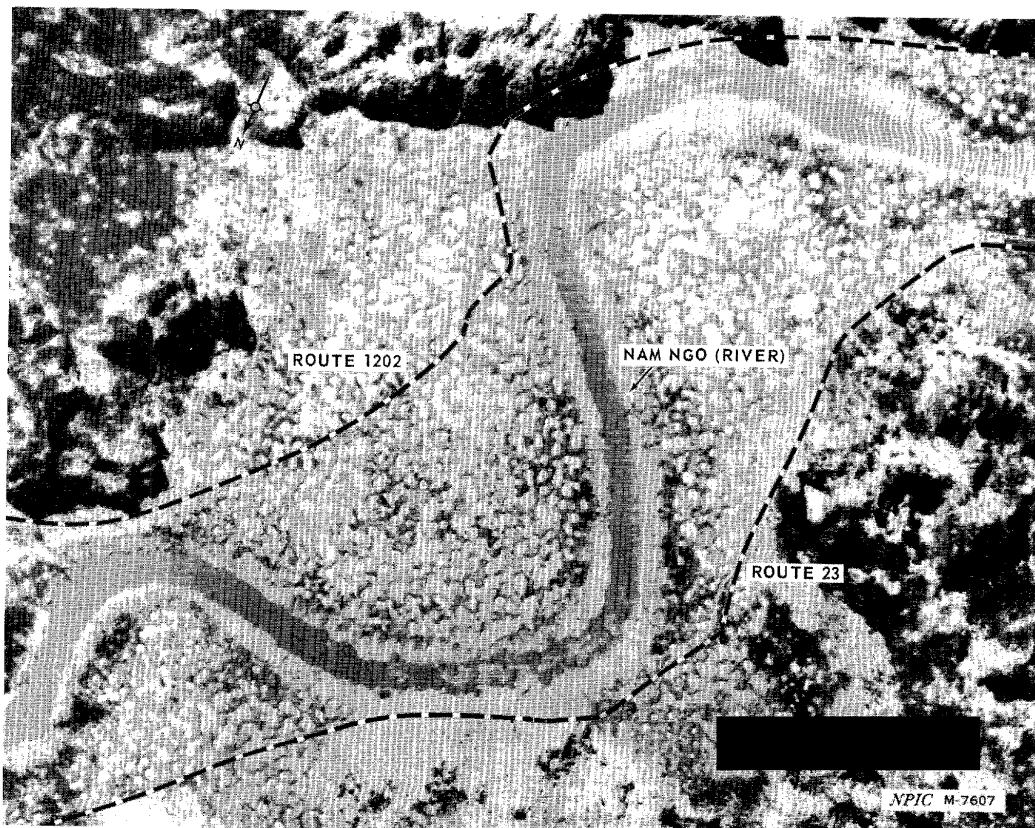
165 and 966 - The western two-thirds of this road appeared serviceable, but was sustaining little, if any, use where intermittently observed early in the reporting period. Lat-

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FIGURE 2. INTERDICTION POINT SOUTH OF MU GIA PASS

er, however, this segment was interdicted in several places, as is the segment east of Chavane (Figure 5).

962 - This road was not observed during the reporting period.

110 - Only the eastern five miles of this road were observed during the reporting period. This area of the road is in very bad condition, especially the areas where landslides have occurred along the Dak Xou (river).

96/110 - This road is in disuse and overgrown in many places but only a few areas will require major reconstruction. No evidence of foot traffic is observed on the road.



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FIGURE 3. WASHOUT DAMAGE, ROUTE 924, BAN BAC, LAOS

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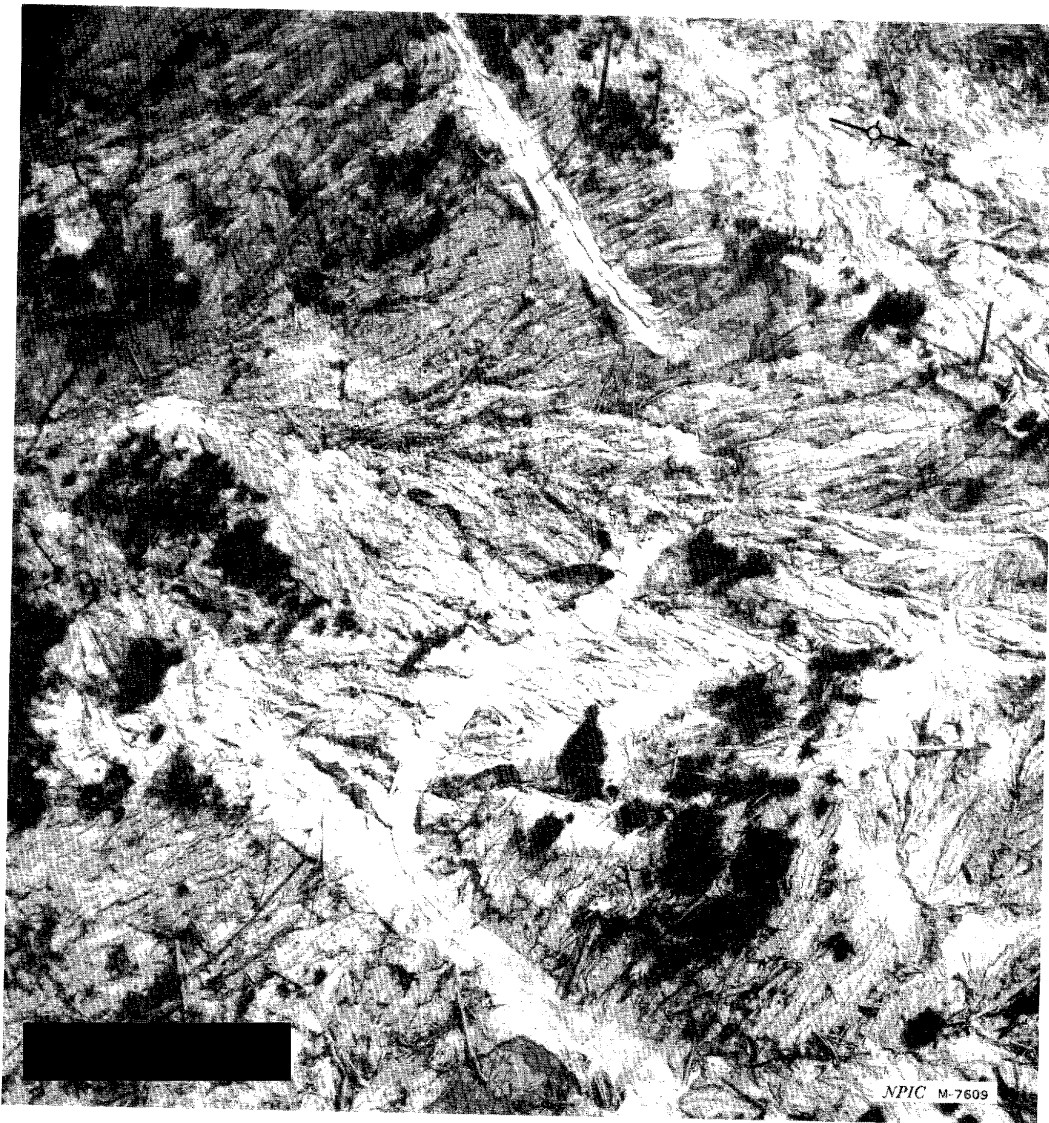
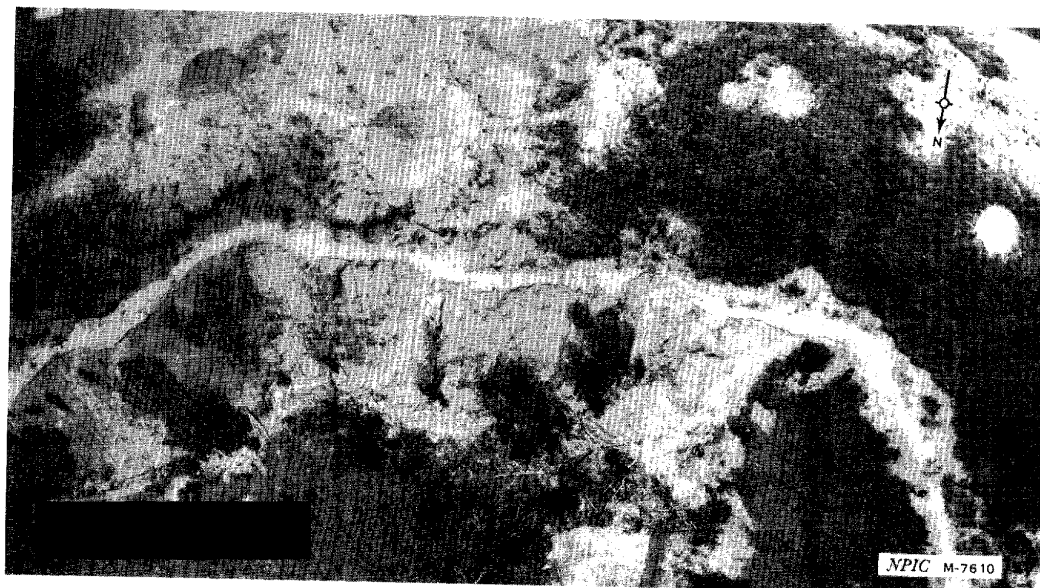


FIGURE 4. LANDSLIDE DAMAGE, ROUTE 924, BAN BAC, LAOS



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FIGURE 5. DETERIORATED ROAD, ROUTE 165, LAOS

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REFERENCES

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This report is based on photography acquired during a [REDACTED] period between [REDACTED]
Photography from [REDACTED] manned aircraft missions flown during this period was used in the preparation of this
report.

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